

The Columbus Democrat.

H. H. WORTHINGTON, Editor.

"A Strict Adherence to the Letter and Spirit of the Constitution--The only Safeguard of the South."

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TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

In this season of comparative repose, when the
dust and smoke of the Presidential campaign are
rapidly disappearing, and the whole national heart
of the country is evidently beginning to acquiesce
in the elevation of those noble spirited and con-
servative democratic statesmen, Franklin Pierce
and William R. King, to the two highest offices
in the Republic--I venture to address you upon a
subject which I cannot but regard as deeply in-
volving your happiness and honor, as the citizens of
a free, enlightened, and patriotic commonwealth.

It is, I assure you, under a sense of indispensa-
ble public duty, that I proceed to lay before you
in strictly temperate, forbearing and courteous lan-
guage, the views which I entertain upon certain
topics connected in a greater or less degree with
scenes of animated and even of unkind controver-
sy which have unfortunately had their progress
among us within the last two or three years. In
the whole course of this address, not a word or
syllable will be intentionally employed, calculated
in the least degree to inflict a serious wound up-
on individual sensibilities, or to cast the faintest
shadow of discredit upon the character of any
human being. I rejoice in believing that the time
has at length arrived when it is clearly in
my power to defend my own reputation as a pub-
lic man without calling in question either the
motives or acts of others. It is my firm deter-
mination, at any rate, as a sincere friend to the
public quiet, if I cannot save myself from unmer-
ited censure, without doing disparagement to the
characters of such as may have chosen from vari-
ous motives heretofore to become my political
troublers, patiently to sink under the burden of
unprovoked prejudice which has been heaped up-
on me by the hands of those who have so long
and so pertinaciously striven to bring about my
political degradation. All that I ask at the hands
of my countrymen, is a fair and impartial exami-
nation of my conduct as a public servant, whilst
laboring for their happiness and safety in the high
civil station to which their unbiased voices ele-
vated me six years ago. If they shall then con-
demn me, no indecent murmurs of complaint
will escape from my lips, nor shall I even seek
the dubious consolation of revenge upon those
who may appear to have been most efficient in
my overthrow.

You are aware, fellow-citizens, that it was my
misfortune, two years ago, to be the subject of a
grave and deliberate censure, at the hands of the
assembled Senators and Representatives of the
Mississippi Legislature, on account of the course
pursued by me touching the Compromise measures
of 1850, whilst those measures were yet under
consideration in the U. S. Senate; and you have
been already informed, as I suppose, that the reso-
lutions of censure, adopted at a period of remark-
able excitement, and without a thorough knowl-
edge, as I have conjectured, of all the trying cir-
cumstances which surrounded me in Washington,
remain yet unrepealed upon our Statute Book--
the rescinding resolutions introduced a week or
two since in the House of Representatives, and so
triumphantly carried through that body, having
afterwards been defeated in the Senate, mainly by
the votes of gentlemen representing counties
which gave large majorities for the measures of
Compromise in the September election of last
year, and which afterwards, in the contest of No-
vember, awarded to me, as a candidate for the
office of Governor, such a generous and decisive
support as any man in the Republic might well
be proud of receiving. It is scarcely necessary
that I should specially bring to your notice the
fact, that in consequence of certain Legislative
proceedings of recent occurrence, the State of
Mississippi will be constrained to rest satisfied
with the services of a single U. S. Senator almost
for the full period of twelve months, after the 4th
day of March next; though, as I have elsewhere
said: "in the mean while, a new administration is
to come into existence; a new cabinet to be or-
ganized; almost the entire mass of Executive pat-
ronage to be disposed of; various important treat-
ies with Foreign Powers, either to be ratified or
rejected; and grave questions, both of war and
peace, in all probability, to be definitely acted up-
on." I shall not now urge upon you the obvious
proposition that it was the duty of the Mississippi
Legislature, at their last winter's session, to elect
a Senator to occupy the place which will then
become vacant by the expiration of the term of
Hon. W. Brooke; nor shall I insist upon the high
constitutional grounds which have been long ago
occupied by others, and which it would be so easy
both to specify and to maintain, by irrefutable
argument. Neither shall I press upon your atten-
tion the plain statutory regulations which apply
to the case, and which would seem to have been
looked upon by a majority of the members of our
State Senate, as of no validity or binding whatso-
ever. It is sufficient for my present purpose, that
the question of electing a U. S. Senator has been
formally re-submitted to the good people of the
State of Mississippi, for their final decision in
November next--as I will presently show to be
the case--and that I have once upon an opportunity
accorded to me, of being tried, upon the charges
preferred against me, by those to whom I have
ever delighted to acknowledge my responsibility,
and to be either acquitted or convicted by them,
according to the showing which may be made
either in my favor or against me. Allow me here
to say, that were I inclined to do so, it would be
quite easy to prove, by such evidence as no pre-
sident man would think for a moment of contest-

ing, that the people of Mississippi confidently ex-
pected last year, whilst the Legislative canvass
was going on, that a Senator of the U. S., for the
term which will commence on the 4th day of
March next, would be chosen by the Legislature,
at the session of last winter. Indeed I am sure
that I should not be contradicted, did I choose to
make the assertion, that the voting population of
the State, in the several counties over which the
same is diffused, did, in the most clear and un-
mistakable manner, intimate in the election of the
members of the Legislature in November, 1851,
their views and wishes in regard to the very indi-
vidual judged by them proper to be elected to the
Senatorial station in question. It is absolutely
certain, that in delivering nearly one hundred and
eighty speeches, whilst the long and laborious
canvass of last summer was in progress, I failed,
on no occasion, to urge this interesting matter up-
on the consideration of those whom I addressed,
and the result was, as no one can now deny, that
there was in the Legislature which was returned,
an overwhelming majority of members, who were,
on joint ballot, prepared to sustain my pretensions
as a Senatorial Candidate. But let this all pass
by. I am quite willing, as I have already de-
clared, to go before the people once more; and I
now confidently join issue with the majority in
State Senate, upon the basis even of their own
preamble and resolution of last winter; which
will be found to have been very deliberately and
formally drawn up, in the following words and
figures, to-wit:

"Whereas, the canvass of 1851, in this State,
was conducted, and the elections held under ex-
traordinary issues, not at all involving the question
of the election of a U. S. Senator, for the Senatorial
term commencing on the 4th day of March,
1853, and whereas, it is deemed right and proper,
that the people should be heard, and their will as-
certained as far as practicable, in a matter so im-
portant to them, as that of selecting a suitable
person, to represent the Sovereign State of Missis-
sippi, in the Senate of the United States; and
further, as the Senator now proposed to be elected,
will not take his seat at a regular session of Con-
gress, until December, 1853, only a few weeks
prior to the meeting of the Legislature of the
State: Therefore resolved, That it is deemed in-
expedient and improper, at this session of the
Legislature, to go into the election of a Senator in
Congress from this State, for the term commencing
on the 4th day of March, 1853; but that it is
right and proper, the same should be postponed,
to the end that the people, at the ballot-box in
November, 1853, may be heard, their will ascer-
tained, and their wishes carried into effect, in
the election of Senators and Representatives to the
Legislature, with a view to carry out that will
in so important a matter as the election of a Sen-
ator in Congress for six years.

Fellow-citizens: I beg you to notice particularly
the phrasing of the noted preamble and resolu-
tion, with a view to the proper understanding
of the precise issue propounded for your deter-
mination in the elections of next Nov. In perfect
harmony with these will be found a report from
a special committee of the Senate, or rather from
a majority thereof, signed by Messrs. O. R. Singleton,
John Bell and Wm. A. Stone. This report was
made on the 13th of March last, and the portion
of it to which I am now referring reads as follows:
"It is a fact, too, that there are a number of aspir-
ants to the office of U. S. Senator, many of whom
are favorite sons of Mississippi, and as the ques-
tion of U. S. Senator, for this term, was not can-
vassed before the country, in the late election,
your committee recommend that it be referred
back to the people, that they may indicate some
favorite who shall occupy this distinguished sta-
tion. Who can object to this course? Should
not their voice prevail in this matter? Is it not
a government founded upon the will of the people,
and if so, have their representatives in the
Legislature a right to preclude them from giving
expression to their wishes? Under ordinary cir-
cumstances, it might not be so important to refer
the matter to their consideration; but at the present
moment, when it is not and cannot be known
what course Congress will take upon the slavery
question, and other questions of vital interest to
the South; it is proper, it is the part of wisdom,
that the people reserve to themselves the right to
send to the U. S. Senate a representative who will
be fresh from their presence, and from a knowl-
edge of their feelings and wishes, will be prepared
to represent them correctly."

I have no critical observations to make upon
this report, though certainly do not concur in
several of the views set forth therein. In response
to some of the important queries so strikingly
propounded in it, I say, without hesitation, that
ours is emphatically "a government founded on
the will of the people." I answer further that
the people's "representatives in the Legislature
have no right to preclude them from giving ex-
pression to their wishes," in relation to the elec-
tion of a U. S. Senator; and, I add with pleas-
ure, that, in my judgment, the "voice" of the
people "should prevail in this matter." I will even
employ language, on this subject, still stronger
than that of the committee, and I do now sol-
emnly promise that, should the people, next No-
vember, in the election of Senators and Representa-
tives to the Legislature, indicate a preference for
any one of their supposed favorites, over myself,
for the station of U. S. Senator, I will at once re-
tire from a contest in which I could not ultimately
triumph, except by resorting to contrivances
which I should regard as degrading to my own
character as a public man, and calculated not only
to defeat the execution of the popular will, but
to overthrow the fundamental principles of our
representative system of government. Should you,
fellow-citizens, once more decide in my favor, I
trust that I shall not be at all wanting in those
feelings of gratitude and esteem, which the gener-
ous support that you have so long steadily ac-
corded to me, might be expected to awaken in
the bosom of one whose heart has ever been ready
to respond to acts either of justice or of generosity.
Should, on the contrary, your decision be
adverse to my wishes, I hope that, even in that
case, I shall be able to exhibit a cheerful resigna-
tion to your will, and even to exclaim, with some-
thing of a pious submission of spirit: "The
people have given, and the people have taken away;
blest be the name of the people!"

It will scarcely be expected that I should yield
my assent to the statement embodied in the pre-
amble and resolution of the Senate, "that the
question of U. S. Senator did not at all enter into
the canvass of 1851, but that the same was con-
ducted upon extraneous issues;" since I have al-
ready asserted, and you, fellow-citizens, know, that

the Senatorial question was raised, and most freely
discussed, in every county of the State, in connection
with the election of Senators and Representa-
tives in the State Legislature. It is but courtes-
y to presume that, that this was only an inno-
cent mistake on the part of those with whom
this astounding statement originated; and being
really at this moment in the best humor in the
world in regard to this very remarkable affair, in
all its multiplied aspects and bearings, and being
less inclined than I ever was in my life, on any
similar occasion, to say anything either offensive
or illiberal;--I am willing to take it for granted,
caveat argumentum, as the logicians say, that the
majority of the Senate did not at all err in the
account of this matter which they have given; and
I now urge that, taking this view of the subject,
I can perceive much both of consistency and
of plausibility in the policy adopted by these gen-
tlemen, of postponing the Senatorial election un-
til the members of a new Legislature have been
chosen; for, inasmuch as the special Legislature
of 1851, under the solemn recommendation of
Gov. Quitman, in his most memorable message of
that period, and in conformity with the earnest
counsels of others also, deliberately resolved to
refer the whole series of Compromise measures to
the people of the State, to be considered of by
them, in their CORPORATE and SOVEREIGN CAPAC-
ITY, upon the grave issue of RESISTANCE or AC-
QUIESCENCE; inasmuch, also, as BY OWN CON-
GREGATIONAL course in connexion with these mea-
sures was necessarily, to some extent, associ-
ated with this same momentous issue, in conse-
quence of the resolution of censure to which I
was subjected at the same session; and inasmuch
as it was supposed that this last-mentioned sub-
ject had, in some way or other, totally evaded the
popular scrutiny; why, what course could be im-
agined more reasonable in itself, more intrinsically
equitable, and more truly respectful, withal, to
the good people of State, (who, I beg leave to
suggest, are really quite as sovereign now as they
were a year ago, and not a whit less competent
than they then were, to come to a wise and salu-
tary conclusion in the premises), than this one of
sending back the Senatorial question to the peo-
ple of the whole State, "to the end that [they] at
the ballot-box in Nov., 1853, may be heard, their
will expressed, and their wishes carried into effect,
in the election of Senators and Representatives to
the Legislature, with a view to carry out that will
in so important a matter as the election of a Sen-
ator in Congress for six years?" I cannot but
hope, that since we have all at least agreed as to
the TIME WHEN, the MODE IN WHICH, and the TER-
MINAL BEFORE WHICH, this vexed question is to
be ultimately determined; there will be no at-
tempt hereafter to shift, evade, or modify, in
the most important particular, the judiciously con-
certed arrangement, which has been, with such
full consideration proposed on one side, and so
cordially assented to on the other, of ascertaining
and carrying into effect the popular will in regard
to the election of a U. S. Senator, at the next
regular session of the Legislature of the State.--
As the venerable editor of the Richmond Enquirer
used to be fond of saying: *SICUT VENUS!!*

And now, fellow-citizens, having formally pre-
sented myself as a Senatorial candidate before you,
permit me to ask, with all humility, why should I
not receive your support for the station to which I
aspire? I have served you in the same place, and
I feel that I hazard nothing in asserting that I
have heretofore served you with a zeal, a fidelity,
and an industry, that could not have been easily
surpassed. Others might doubtless be named,
whose capabilities for senatorial service are in
every way far superior to my own, and who would
have been able to obtain, in a four year's con-
gressional career, much more of solid and endur-
ing renown than I have been my fortune to acquire.
But fellow-citizens, it has been usual in our good
State of Mississippi, to allow public functionaries,
of every grade and description, once at least to en-
joy the honor of re-election to such stations as
have been occupied by them, unless indeed it
should appear that they have in some way de-
meaned themselves in such a manner as to de-
mand signal reprobation on account of official
mis-conduct. If it be really suspected that such
is my own predicament at the present moment, it
is at least to be hoped that some one of my ac-
cuers, more gracious than the rest, will be kind
enough plainly to specify my offences.

I recognize myself as being now regularly on
trial before you, and I boldly challenge my adver-
saries, separately and collectively, to come for-
ward and occupy the chair of accusation. If it
be determined to prefer charges against me in
clear and unequivocal language, I shall myself
rejoice to see them brought forward at some ear-
ly day, and shall certainly be ready to meet them,
and to put my accusers, one and all, to open
shame. Should it be thought expedient to let
a *sulle proscripi* be entered, I shall expect never
to be hereafter removed with such wretched imputa-
tions as those which I have been heretofore com-
pelled to encounter.

It will scarcely be expected that, in an address
like this, I should enter upon a detailed expo-
sition and defence of my whole Congressional life.
Indeed, I am not aware that any part of it has
been objected to or complained of, by any indi-
vidual of that party to whose votes in the Legisla-
ture I was indebted for my former election to the
Senate, except that portion which has unfortu-
nately fallen under Legislative censure. Elected,
more than six years ago, as an accredited member
of the Democratic party, it will not be denied,
that I yielded a zealous and uniform support,
as a senator, for nearly two years, to all
the leading measures of Mr. Polk's administration.
I had the happiness, at least, to earn the warm ap-
proval of that eminent democratic statesman,
and I had also the honor of receiving a formal
declaration of his gratitude and esteem, at the mo-
ment of his departure from Washington City in
the spring of 1849. Had I not been recognized
by those most familiar with my course in Con-
gress as having been faithful in the performance
of my duty as a democratic Senator, and been
considered a firm and zealous supporter and de-
fender of Mr. Polk's administration, I should hard-
ly have been called upon, as I am now, to justify
immediately upon the reception of the sad intel-
ligence of his decease, by the Jackson Democrati-
cal Association of Washington City, to deliver a
eulogy upon the life and character of that illu-
strious personage, at the Capital of the Republic.

General Taylor was inaugurated on the 4th
day of March, 1849. At that period, it will be
recalled that great excitement prevailed in ev-
ery part of the Union upon the question of Afri-
can slavery. The Southern States of the con-

federacy seemed to be threatened with the utter
destruction of their valued domestic institutions.
There appeared to be but little doubt, that the ac-
cused *Wilmot Proviso* would be attached to all
the territory which had been recently acquired
from Mexico. The abolition of slavery in the
District of Columbia, had been several times at-
tempted, and there appeared to be very great
danger of this mischievous scheme being finally
consummated. The provision of the Constitution
of the United States guaranteeing the rendition
of fugitives from service, had been for some years
openly disregarded in most of the free States
of the North; and the odious *higher law* doctrine,
(subversive of every thing like a decent respect
for the constituted authorities of the republic),
was rapidly diffusing itself among the fanatical
followers of that most dangerous of political in-
cendiaries, Wm. H. Seward of New York--who
was himself shortly to be allowed by a patriotic,
but over-confident Chief Magistrate, to wield an
enormous amount of the Executive patronage of
the Government. The Clayton Compromise Bill,
as it was called, had been defeated by certain no-
torious political intrigues, sometime before. The
Walker amendment, which could it have re-
ceived the sanction of the two Houses of Con-
gress, might have warded off the most serious
dangers then menaced, had failed to become a
law, in consequence of a regular system of man-
agement, carried into execution on the last night
of Mr. Polk's administration term, of which Mr.
Seward was the avowed originator.

During the summer of 1849, several interest-
ing movements occurred, in different parts of the
Republic, the recollection of which will not soon
perish. The people of California called a Con-
vention for the purpose of establishing a State
Constitution and asking admission into the Union.
The people of Utah pursued the same course, and
doubtless to some extent, under similar influ-
ences. The inhabitants of New Mexico were preparing
to follow these two examples. The excitement on
the question of slavery which had previously ex-
isted in the Southern States of the confederacy, as
was natural to be expected under the circumstan-
ces, became extremely intense. All sensible men
plainly saw that a most alarming crisis was at
hand. It had become most obvious to every one
that the adoption of the *Wilmot Proviso*, or the
abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia,
would either of them, of itself, be sufficient to dis-
solve the Union. It was equally plain that the
admission of California, as an additional free
State, without having passed through the cus-
tomary period of territorial probation, would
work the same effect, unless her admission should
be accompanied with other Legislative enactments
of a nature to secure full justice to the South in
regard to past infractions of her rights, and a
perfect security for the future in reference to the still
more serious infractions which had been so fier-
cely threatened.

The first Monday in December of 1849, was
approaching. You, my fellow-citizens, had deemed
it expedient to explore all the dangers of the
hour, with a cool and searching scrutiny, and, in
a spirit of elevated patriotism, you had essayed,
during the Summer and Autumn preceding, to
provide, as far as might be possible, for your own
security, and for the safety of the Union. You
had assembled in Convention during the month
of October, and had adopted resolutions expres-
sive of your views upon the pending questions,
marked in the highest degree, as I then thought,
and as I yet think, with true wisdom, ardent love
of country, and inflexible devotion to the fun-
damental principles of our noble republican gov-
ernment. I was far distant from your confines at
the time; but though I could not be a participant
in your proceedings, I cordially approved them,
and have ever openly defended and maintained
them subsequently.

Taking the same view that you appeared to
have done, of this whole subject, it had seemed to
me judicious to make some preparations to meet
the difficulties and perils which I was certain
would mark the approaching Session of Con-
gress. Accordingly I drew up a plan of settle-
ment, in the form of a Bill, which I afterwards
introduced into the Senate, which was entitled,
"*A Bill to provide for the organization of a terri-
torial government in California, Decret, and for
New Mexico, and to enable the people of said
territories to form a constitution and State govern-
ment, and for the admission of such State into the
Union, upon an equal footing with the original States
in all respects whatsoever.*"

This bill was offered in the Senate, on the 6th
day of January, 1850, and was referred to the
Committee on territories in that body, on the 22d
of the same month; the only speech made in sup-
port of it, being one delivered by myself. At a
still earlier period of the session, to-wit: on the
27th day of December preceding, I had offered
a resolution in the Senate, drawn up in the fol-
lowing words:

"Resolved, That it is the duty of Congress, at
this session, to establish suitable Territorial Gov-
ernments for California, Decret, and for
New Mexico."

If my recollection serves me correctly, the only
speech made in support of this resolution, also,
was one made by myself.

Early in the month of January, as many of
you doubtless recollect, it became quite apparent
that it would be altogether impossible to prevent
the admission of California into the Union, at that
session of Congress. Indeed, in the same month
of January, a letter was addressed by my Con-
gressional colleagues and myself, to the eminent
gentlemen then acting as Governor of the State,
informing him that it was our united opinion that
the admission of California, during that session,
was inevitable. I should like now to know, what
any reasonable citizen of this State would have
had me to do under such circumstances? Will it
be contended that it was my duty, quietly to fold
my arms, and allow California to come in, as a
separate measure, and the Union itself in all proba-
bility, to be broken up by such admission? Or
was it sounder policy, to lay hold of the acknowl-
edged popularity of the measure of admission,
and wield it for the purpose of obtaining justice
to the South, upon all the outstanding questions
of slavery? The latter, at any rate, was precisely
what I desired to do; and accordingly, I intro-
duced a resolution into the Senate, on the 25th day
of February, which proposed the raising of a Com-
mittee of 13, whose duty it should be, to take in-
to consideration all the questions arising out of
the institution of domestic slavery, with a view to
the maturing of a plan of Compromise, for the
final settlement of the same. This resolution, af-

ter undergoing various modifications, to all of
which I had assented, in the spirit of conciliation
in which the resolution itself had originated, was
finally adopted by the Senate on the 18th of
April, by the following vote, to-wit:

YEAS--Messrs. Atkinson, Badger, Borland, Bell,
Bright, Cass, Clay, Climens, Davis, Miss, Dickinson,
Dodge of Iowa, Downs Fosta, Hunter, King, Jones,
Mangum, Mason, Morton, Pearce, Reak, Sebastian, Soule,
Sprague, Sturgeon, Turney, Underwood, Whitcomb,
and Yule--80.

NAYS--Messrs. Baldwin, Benton, Bradbury, Chase,
Clarke, Corwin, Davis of Massachusetts, Dayton, Dodge
of Wisconsin, Douglas, Feltch, Greene, Hale, Hamlin,
Miller, Norris, Phelps, Seward, Shields, Smith, Walker,
and Webster--23.

From this statement it appears that every
Southern Senator, except Mr. Benton, voted for
the resolution, and that no Northern Senator, at
all suspected of *freedomism* or *abolitionism*, did
vote for it.

It should be borne in mind, that from the be-
ginning of the session, up to the day of the pas-
sage of the resolution for raising the Committee
of 13, the excitement on the subject of slavery
had been constantly on the increase. Agitation
of the most extreme character, had been going on
without intermission, in both Houses of Con-
gress.

On the 13th of February, the President of the
United States, had sent in a message, communicat-
ing to the Senate the constitution of the State of
California. Upon the reception of this message,
Mr. Benton had introduced a motion to refer the
same to a special Committee, with a view to the
immediate admission of California into the Union,
as a separate measure. Those who chose to in-
spect the pages of the Congressional Globe, will
find that the only opposition which this motion
of Mr. Benton encountered, proceeded from myself,
and that to the course of the remarks, which I
made in opposition to it, I said; "I hold in my
hand a resolution which I intended to offer during
the day, the object of which is to refer this par-
ticular subject, together with all questions now
before Senate, connected with domestic slavery, to
a special Committee of 13 members of the Senate
to be chosen by ballot. For one, Sir, I am un-
willing that the different portions of this subject
shall be divided," &c.

From that time forward, the most persevering
efforts were made by the enemies of the South,
both in the Senate and House of Representatives,
in support of the claim of California to separate
admission. Mr. Clay, to be sure, had introduced
his famous Compromise Resolutions of the 20th
of January, and had delivered a noble patriotic
speech in support of them; but several of Mr.
Clay's propositions had been strongly objected to
by Southern Senators, including myself, and a
very heated debate had sprung up thereupon,
which I am sure, had tended to raise new im-
pediments to settlement. On the 4th of March, Mr.
Calhoun had caused to be read in the Senate, his
well known speech upon Mr. Clay's resolutions,
in which he had demanded an amendment of the
federal constitution, which amendment he spoke
of only in general terms, as "an amendment which
would restore to the South, in substance, the power
she possessed of protecting herself, before the
equilibrium between the sections was destroyed by
the action of the Government."

On the day after Mr. Calhoun's speech, a scene
occurred in the Senate, several particulars of
which I shall never cease to regret, though I have
never yet discovered the least reason to suppose,
that the part which I acted therein was at all de-
serving of censure. I confess that the portion of
Mr. Calhoun's speech, in which he had demanded
an amendment of the constitution of the United
States, as indispensable to the settlement of the
pending questions, had greatly alarmed me. I
had heard him repeatedly declare, that he regard-
ed any change of the constitution as utterly im-
possible. I well knew from repeated declarations
from his own lips, that he utterly despised
the longer continuance of the Union; and was
looking forward to the period, which he did not
conceive to be then remote, when all the States
of the South would be compelled by a prudential
regard for their own safety to withdraw from
the Union, and establish a Southern Confederacy.

I had heard this eminent man more than once de-
clare that anticipating the occurrence of disunion,
(which I am willing to believe, he did not intend
to aid in precipitating,) he had already matured
a constitution for the new Republic, which he ex-
pected soon to spring into existence, under which
constitution he predicted the Southern section of
the Union would enjoy an amount of prosperity
never before realized. I believed him to be per-
fectly conscientious in the entertainment of these
extreme views, and therefore could not but feel a
greater solicitude for what might occur in the
future. He knew very well, before his speech was
read in the Senate, that I could not co-operate
with him, in the course which he had marked out
for himself, and he had been distinctly informed
by me that the people of Mississippi greatly pre-
ferred a fair and honorable settlement of the exist-
ing questions, to any of those dubious advan-
tages which a resort to the perilous remedy of dis-
union might seem to promise. With a knowl-
edge of these facts, fellow-citizens, and with a
knowledge of the additional fact that the Wash-
ington Convention was about to commence its ses-
sion, and might possibly be hurried into indis-
creet action by the promulgation of such views
as those contained in the speech of Mr. Calhoun,
you will not consider it at all surprising that, in
YOUR NAME, I thought proper to PROTEST MOST
PROMPTLY AGAINST THIS DEMAND OF CONSTITU-
TIONAL AMENDMENT. Indeed I felt it to be my
duty, on the very next day after this unfortunate
speech had been read, to enter this protest; and I
proceeded to the Hall of the Senate in the
morning with more than ordinary eagerness,
with a view to the performance of this duty of
patriotism. I shall not trouble you at present,
with copious extracts from what I then said; but
I am sure you will cordially unite with me, in re-
iterating, now, what I then felt it my duty to
declare, that I was "quite satisfied, for the present,
with the constitution as framed by our wise
and patriotic fathers." I am certain that
you do not blame me, fellow-citizens, for ad-
ding on that momentous occasion: "I am for the
constitution and its guarantees. I am for the
Union, as provided for and delineated in that
sacred instrument. It is not a new Constitution,
nor an amended constitution, for which I have
been all along contending; not such a Union as may
be hereafter provided by the wisdom of the present
generation; but the good old Union, the fruit of
the sage counsels of our immortal ancestors, men
never surpassed in all that is calculated to enable

humanity and give true glory to nations. I must
insist that the strong ground of the South has
heretofore been that we seek only what the Constitu-
tion entitles us to demand; we ask but justice un-
der the Constitution and that protection and safety
which its provisions were intended to secure.
And sir I am not prepared, indeed, I am by no
means prepared to quit this wrong ground, and
assert that we of the South will have no settlement
of existing difficulties unless we can effect a modifi-
cation of the federal compact."

Fellow-citizens: If any of you at all doubt as to
the true meaning of Mr. Calhoun's speech, deliv-
ered on the 4th of March 1850, you will doubt
no longer when you glance for a moment at the
following extract from a dialogue which occurred
between him and myself in open Senate, on the
very morning when my protest was interposed.
Read, if you please, from the Congressional Globe,
as follows:

Mr. Calhoun. But I will say, and I say it
boldly--for I am not afraid to say the truth on
any question--that, as things now stand, the
Southern States cannot with safety remain in the
Union. When this question may be settled
when we shall come to a constitutional under-
standing, is a question of time; but as things now
stand, I appeal to the Senator from Mississippi, if
he thinks that the South can remain in the Union
upon terms of equality?

Mr. Foote. We cannot, unless the pending
question is settled; but in my opinion, these ques-
tions may be settled, honorably settled within ten
days' time.

Mr. Calhoun. Does the Senator think that
the South can remain in the Union, upon terms
of equality without a specific guarantee that she
shall enjoy her rights unimpaired?

Mr. Foote. I think she may, without any pre-
vious amendment of the Constitution. There we
disagree.

Mr. Calhoun. Yes there we disagree entirely;
and there, I think he disagrees with his ances-
tors, &c.

The precise nature of the Constitutional amend-
ment upon which Mr. Calhoun designed to insist,
is now perfectly understood by those who have
read his interesting work on Government; which
has been published since his decease. We learn
from that volume that his opinion was that the
South would never be safe, in the Union, unless
an amendment of the Constitution should take
place, providing for the establishment of a dual
Executive--that is to say, he desired to have two
Presidents elected, one from the South, and the
other from the North, each of whom should be
armed with the full veto power. It seems to me
(with due difference) that it is about equally certain
that such a demand of constitutional amendment
would never have been yielded to, as it is that the
destruction of the Union would have been the in-
evitable consequence of such a radical innovation
upon the established organic law.

Two days after the dialogue which has been
quoted from, Mr. Webster delivered his great
7th of March speech; the effect of which was
undeniably most happy in composing the public
mind of the country, and strengthening those
hopes of ultimate settlement, which had been for
some time most sensibly declining. Three days
thereafter, though, Wm. H. Seward of New
York, delivered himself of that oratorical
Monstrum horrendum of his, upon "CALIFORNIA,
UNION, and FARMING," in which he unveiled to
the world, the Pandemonium splendor of his
higher law code of political ethics. Meanwhile
news had reached the Halls of Congress that se-
rious disturbances had arisen in New Mexico, and
that a collision of arms was evidently impending
between the regular forces of the United States,
and the government and people of Texas. This
affair finally assumed so serious a cast, that the
most resolute minds in Washington, began almost
to shudder at the prospect of immediate civil war,
and to look forward to scenes of intestine butch-
ery and bloody domestic strife. I confess fellow-
citizens, that beholding these dangers every day
multiplying, and growing more and more appal-
ling every hour that the work of pacification was
delayed. I resolved to persist steadily in urging
upon the attention of the Senate, my proposition
for raising the "Committee of thirteen," to whose
labors alone I felt compelled to look for the ulti-
mate deliverance of the country from the perils
with which fiction had environed it. I shall not
dwell upon the labors of that noble committee
while silently engaged in the preparation of the
scheme of settlement, which in a few days was re-
ported by its illustrious chairman to the Senate
and the country. These labors are now immortal
having become imperishably associated with such
achievement of past ages, as lend most lustre to
the annals of nations; and they resulted in the ultimate
adoption of measures, which I have on a former
occasion declared to "stand canonized and irrevo-
cably confirmed by the death of their ablest Ad-
vocate and Defender."

I have no wish to expatiate upon those scenes of
fierce altercation and unbrotherly strife which